

REMARKS

Enclosed herewith is a verified English translation of Japanese priority document Number 2002-345543. The certified copy of this document was filed on November 28, 2002 in Japan.

Claims 1 and 3-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Nakamura et al. (U.S. Publication No. US 2003/0231272 A1). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection in view of the perfection of the foreign priority date of November 28, 2002.

Nakamura has a U.S. filing date of May 30, 2003. The foreign priority reference of the present application has a filing date of November 28, 2002. Thus, the foreign priority date of the present invention is earlier than the United States filing date of Nakamura. As a claim for foreign priority has been perfected with the filing of the enclosed verified translation, Applicants respectfully request that the §102(e) rejection of claims 1 and 3-6 be withdrawn. (See MPEP 201.15).

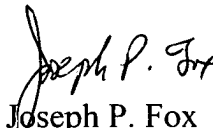
Claims 2, 7-8, and 10-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura in view one or more of Arakawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,621,550 B1), Shibahara (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0008836 A1), Sawasaki et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2001/0026347 A1) and Yamada et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,729,318). Applicants traverse the rejection for the reasons recited above with respect to the §102(e) rejection based on Nakamura. Since Applicants have perfected the foreign priority date,

Nakamura is excluded as prior art. Accordingly, each of the outstanding §103 rejections is moot, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

GREER, BURNS & CRAIN, LTD.

By 
Joseph P. Fox
Registration No. 41,760

January 3, 2006
300 South Wacker Drive, Suite 2500
Chicago, Illinois 60606
(312) 360-0080
Customer No. 24978